

**Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission
Committee of the Whole
Monday May 6, 2013
University of Minnesota Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC)**

Minutes

Commissioners Present: Jeff Strand, Ishmael Israel, Jeffrey Martin, Doron Clark, Kenya McKnight, Tessa Wetjen

Staff Present: David Rubedor, Lance Knuckles, Howard Blin

Others Present: Lissa Jones, consultant.

Tessa Wetjen called the meeting to order at 5:40 PM.

Agenda

1. Relations Between NCEC/NCR/City

Rubedor provided background on the commission and the department, describing the origins of the NCR and NCEC. The NCR was established to break down barriers and work with neighborhoods. It differs from the NRP model in the NRP was governed by an independent board and the NCR Department reports to the Mayor and City Council. The NCEC was established to advise the City Council. The NCEC is tasked with reviewing plans and policies, but also to bring forward ideas and issues for the City to consider. The NCEC is unique among City advisory commissions in that it includes members elected by neighborhood organizations. He also noted the repurposed establishing resolution for the NCEC which was adopted by the City Council in December 2011.

Commissioners made the following comments:

- It was noted that the Department and NCEC do not always have to concur on recommendations to the City Council. In cases where there is not agreement, the Commission needs to be sure it's voice is heard.
- The two areas where there have been differences between the Commission and the Department were on the 2011 Repurposing resolution, where the Hinds resolution was not included, and that part of the CPP Guidelines which shifts responsibility from the NCEC to the NCR. This last change has led to less connection between the NCEC and stakeholders. Rubedor responded that to ensure a greater connection between the Commission and neighborhoods it would not be necessary to change the guidelines, but look at a change in the process.

- It was questioned whether the existing communications foster a good relationship. Often times recommendations are made to the City Council or decisions are made so fast that there is not time for input from the NCEC. It was noted that often the Commission gets updates from staff, but doesn't always have the opportunity for input. Rubedor suggested that issues related to engagement be placed at the top of Commission agendas.
- A Commissioner stated that the distance between neighborhood organizations and the City has closed in recent years. The NCEC doesn't need to review every neighborhood plan, but should be aware of what is being proposed.
- The new bylaws call for an annual self-evaluation of the full Commission and the Executive Committee. This should be done in May.
- It was suggested that information be provided in the Commission packet rather than only presented orally at the meetings. This would allow for greater understanding of issues by Commissioners.
- It was also suggested that the Commission needs to find its own work and not only rely on matters to be brought forward by staff.
- Despite some dysfunction, the NCEC has accomplished a great deal. An example is the Community Participation Program Guidelines. Lack of participation by all Commissioners has been an issue.

2. Blueprint for Equity

Knuckles described the next steps in the process. A meeting was held the previous week with Project for Pride in Living to discuss equity issues. The meeting was very productive and will serve as an example for future meetings with other groups.

Jones noted that equity is part of the core function of the NCR. She reported on the recent visit by City of Seattle staff to report on their Race and Social Justice Initiative.

A question was asked whether the Blueprint effort was to talk about disparities or to evaluate disparities.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Submitted by Howard Blin